

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 9

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

Nathan P. Cote

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE REMOVAL OF  
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION FUNDING CAPS IN MEDICARE.

WHEREAS, the sixteenth report of the council on graduate medical education, "Physician Workforce Policy Guidelines for the United States", projects a significant gap between the expected physician supply and the demand for physicians in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico health policy commission report, "HM2: State Funded Primary Care Residency Slots", estimates that although sixty percent of New Mexicans live in rural areas, sixty-four percent of New Mexico's physicians practice in the urban areas of Albuquerque, Los Alamos and Santa Fe; and

WHEREAS, primary care providers are essential to an effective health care delivery system, providing crucial acute,

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1 chronic and preventive health care services; and

2 WHEREAS, the federal government funds graduate medical  
3 education largely through the federal medicare program,  
4 allotting funds to teaching hospitals; and

5 WHEREAS, according to the council on graduate medical  
6 education, if the number of medical school graduates increases  
7 without a corresponding increase in graduate medical education  
8 positions, medical schools and teaching hospitals will have  
9 little flexibility for expansion; and

10 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico school of medicine,  
11 established in 1961, is the only medical school in the state;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico health sciences  
14 program reports that the family medicine residency program,  
15 with sites in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Santa Fe and Roswell,  
16 has experienced substantial growth since its inception, with a  
17 very positive track record in graduating practitioners who  
18 remain in New Mexico and who practice in rural areas; and

19 WHEREAS, New Mexico communities are currently trying to  
20 recruit a substantial number of primary care providers, and the  
21 need for primary care providers will only increase with the  
22 aging of the population, changing demographics and the  
23 retirement of existing practitioners; and

24 WHEREAS, in order to meet anticipated future health care  
25 needs in the state, the university of New Mexico school of

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1 medicine and the university of New Mexico hospital will require  
2 both flexibility and adequate funding from various sources,  
3 including graduate medical education funding; and

4 WHEREAS, adequate graduate medical education funding would  
5 permit expansion of existing rural residency programs and an  
6 ultimate increase in the number of primary care practitioners  
7 in rural New Mexico; and

8 WHEREAS, in 1996, the federal medicare program capped the  
9 number of residents that could be funded through graduate  
10 medical education at a teaching hospital; and

11 WHEREAS, numerous calls for reform and innovation in  
12 graduate medical education have not resulted in removal of the  
13 funding caps;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
15 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the members of the New Mexico  
16 congressional delegation be requested to support and promote  
17 measures to remove graduate medical education funding caps in  
18 medicare; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
20 transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional  
21 delegation.